

August 18, 2015

To the Honorable Members of
The Illinois House of Representatives
99th General Assembly:

Today I return House Bill 3324 with specific recommendations for change in order to clarify the obligations imposed on the Department of Human Services.

The Department distributes benefits to Illinoisans under the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid assistance. Residents rely on these benefits every day in order to provide for their families.

This bill proposes that the Department collect “employment information” from applicants in their application for benefits and then compile this information into an annual report submitted to the General Assembly. The bill leaves “employment information” undefined; it is entirely unclear what that this information may be. The Department already compiles data on each applicant’s employment income. It is not clear how collecting employers’ names or other information will improve the Department’s ability to distribute benefits.

The bill also does not articulate how this sort of data collection might improve the Department’s services or Illinoisans’ wellbeing. Because the bill would impose a significant burden on the Department, it is necessary to address this threshold issue. It is clear that the Department would need to gather a massive amount of data and create a special program to capture this new data. This will take away time and resources from implementation of SNAP and Medicaid benefits and would also impose additional costs on the State.

Therefore, pursuant to Article IV, Section 9(e) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return House Bill 3324, entitled “AN ACT concerning public aid”, with the following specific recommendations for change:

On page 1, line 9, by replacing “employment information”, to “amount of employment income”; and

On page 1, line 13, by replacing "employment information", to "amount of employment income".

With these changes, House Bill 3324 will have my approval. I respectfully request your concurrence.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rauner
GOVERNOR